

For Release in AM's, Tuesday, February 2, 1971
(Phoned to AP, UPI, Strother)

WASHINGTON--U.S. Sen. Robert C. Byrd (D-W.Va.) Monday said he would "vigorously oppose any efforts to abolish the Appalachian Regional Commission," and added that Appalachian-type programs "should be expanded to other underdeveloped areas."

In a Senate floor statement, Byrd called "most unwise" a reported Administration proposal to abolish the ARC and rechannel its funds into the proposed revenue-sharing plan.

"The Appalachian programs are necessarily long-range," Byrd said, "and they put the emphasis exactly where the Administration says it wants the emphasis put -- on local planning and initiative."

Byrd added that the ARC "grew out of an unusual federal-state concept that the federal government ought to assist underdeveloped areas of our country to realize their full potential -- a concept as valid as the revenue-sharing proposal.

"Many important projects such as highway construction are underway or in planning stages," Byrd noted. "It would be foolish to change the signals now."